Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A message router for routing a message between a server and a plurality of protocol gateways ~~that include processors to encapsulate and transparently convey messages with a plurality of message sources utilizing respective network protocols~~, the message router comprising:

~~an authenticator to authenticate that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network, said authenticator authenticating said particular source of said message before said message is routed by said message router;~~

a load balancer module ~~associated with said message router~~ to determine a historical message transmission record for transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways, said transmission record comprising identification of a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of ~~said source~~ a client device associated with ~~of~~ said message among ~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols of message sources; and

a ~~processor~~ routing module to route said message from said message router to a particular protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway and said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said message ~~for said source of said message that utilizes said support protocol~~.

20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router is a least recently used message router.

22. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router routes said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

23. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router routes said message based on a content of said message.

24. (currently amended) A method of routing a message between a server and a protocol gateway comprising:

establishing communications between a message router and ~~providing~~ a plurality of protocol gateways ~~that include processors~~ to encapsulate ~~and transparently convey~~ messages communicated with a plurality of message source[[s]] devices utilizing respective network protocols;

~~authenticating that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network before said message is routed by a message router;~~

determining, from said message router, a historical record for transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways comprising a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of ~~said source~~ a client device associated with ~~of~~ said message among ~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols; and

routing said message from said message router to a particular protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway and said ~~for~~ said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said message.

25. (canceled)

26. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

27. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, further comprising:

routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

28. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, further comprising:

routing said message based on a content of said message.

29. (currently amended) An apparatus for routing a message between a server and a protocol gateway comprising:

means for establishing communications between a message router and ~~providing~~ a plurality of protocol gateways ~~that include processors~~ to encapsulate ~~and transparently convey~~ messages communicated with a plurality of message source[[s]] devices utilizing respective network protocols;

~~means for authenticating that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network before said message is routed by a message router;~~

means for determining, from said message router, a historical record for transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways comprising a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of ~~said source~~ a client device associated with ~~of~~ said message among ~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols; and

means for routing said message from said message router to a particular protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway and said ~~for~~ said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said message.

30. (canceled)

31. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

32. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

33. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message based on a content of said message.

34-41. (canceled)